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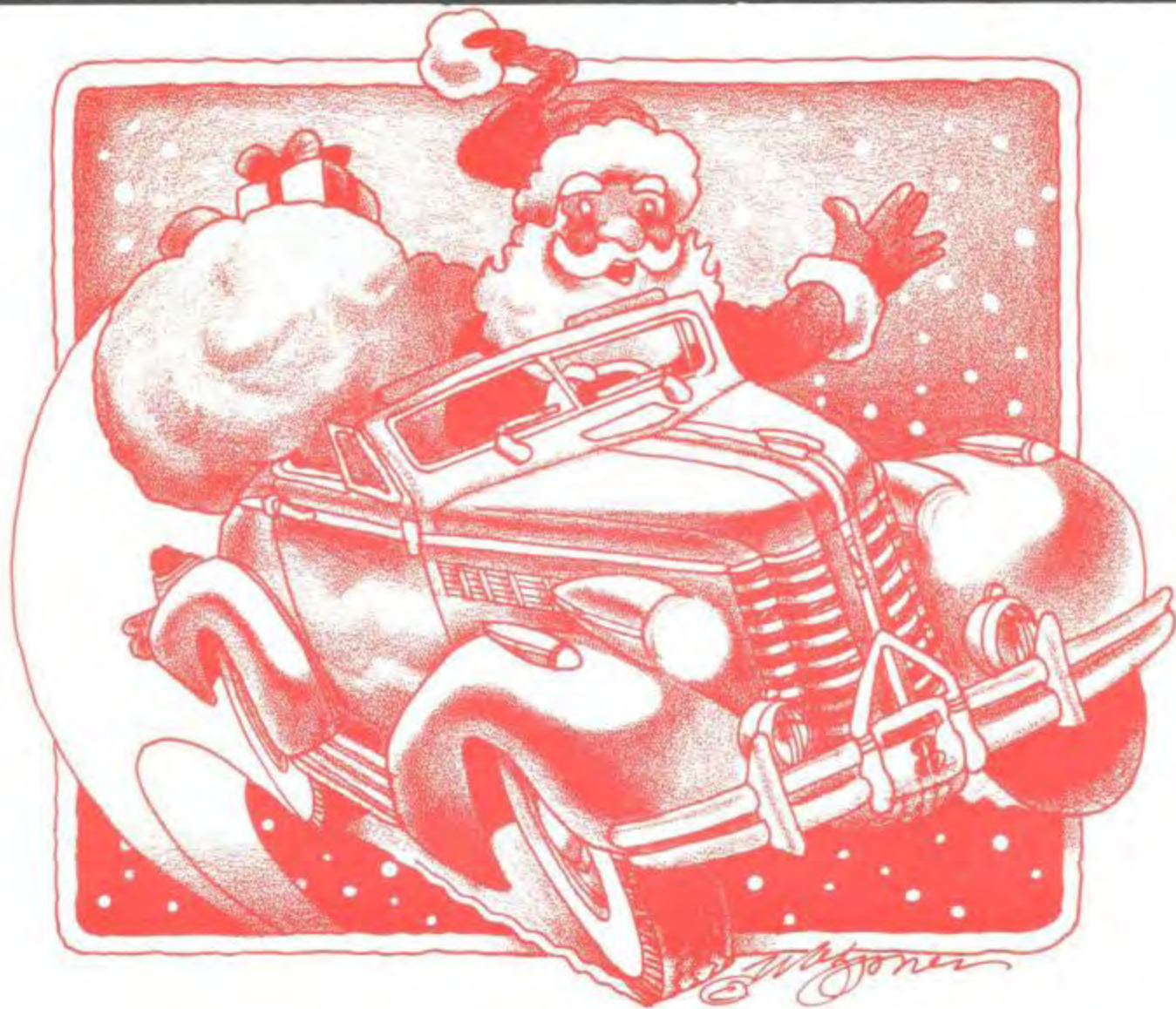
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THE TORQUE·TUBE

THE NEWS PUBLICATION FOR MEMBERS

OF THE 1937-1938 BUICK CLUB • FOUNDED 1980



Volume V • Number 3



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VOL. V • December 1986 • NO. 3

• William E. Olson, Editor •

• 842 Mission Hills Lane, Worthington, Ohio 43085 •

GOODWILL

Whatever one's religious bent, the "Holiday Season" may be a time for renewed emphasis on benevolence and goodwill. Thus two stories in this issue, by Bill VanderHoven and Rick Wilson, are particularly apt: both members emphasize the help they have received from fellow hobbyists who gave freely of their resources, time and knowledge. Some time ago, I wrote a brief statement of the purposes of this Club, which include not only the restoration and preservation of automobiles but also the sharing of knowledge, experiences, and friendship.

I feel that each member is a friend of mine, although I have never met the great majority, and I am perpetually interested in what you all do, what you look like, where you live and what it's like there. I don't mean that I'm nosey or wish to pry into anyone's personal affairs: I do think, however, that knowing a little something about one another enhances the spirit and cohesiveness -- and the fun -- of the Club. I certainly have the impression that there is great diversity among us: many different occupations, income levels, lifestyles, ages and attitudes. A bit of this has come through in some of the stories and letters that have been written, but let us have some more: photos of yourselves, wives, kids, dogs; where do you live, what's the place like, what happens there? Garrison Keilor has enthralled millions of us (and made a fair piece of change, I daresay) with tale after tale of small-town life in Minnesota in Lake Wobegon Days and the "Prairie Home Companion" show. I love it! We need not go to such lengths, and I do not suggest that everyone set down the story of his life or a Baedeker of his home town. But...share just a little of yourself with us. Thanks. Here endeth the Editor's Christmas Homily.

FOUNDED BY



DAVE LEWIS

DO WE WANT MORE??
DECALS ARE SOLD OUT

The original run of Club decals has been sold. As I recall, the minimum order (500) cost about \$150 up front in 1984. I paid for them myself, and turned the proceeds of sales over to the Club once my investment plus a moderate cost-of-money factor had been recovered. I do not especially want to finance another run myself, and I do not want to put out the Club's money and then see the decals unsold for a long period. It took over two years to sell the first 500. So, before I do anything further, I would like to see some expression of interest sufficient to indicate that at least 100 will be sold rather quickly, or I would like a volunteer to pay for a second run and then sell them himself. (It will be observed that a decent profit is recoverable at the prices I charged.) New members and those who have acquired new cars -- or even new window glass -- really should have some. To refresh everyone's memory, the decals were made by the Angelus Pacific Company of California, a leading maker of custom decals and emblems for clubs, universities, fire and police departments, etc. They were very well done and look great. What do you all say?

TORQUE TUBE BACK ISSUES

There remain a couple of dozen copies each of Volume IV, Issues 3 through 9 (December 1985-July 1986). These are taking up too much room in the Editor's basement. I keep falling over the boxes; if I'm going to fall over something, I'd rather fall over car parts. (I always have extra copies printed because: (a) I don't know how many new members will join in any year; (b) the printer is allowed a certain variation in the number produced; and (c) a large part of the printing cost is the setting up of plates and the making of half-tones, thus the incremental cost of, say, 50 copies is a small part of the whole bill.) Normally, if people ask for back issues and I have them, I sell each for \$3.25 including postage, a price established by dividing the annual dues by nine and rounding off to the nearest 25 cents, thus approximating a member's cost per issue. In order to get these boxes out from under my feet, however, there will be a

★ SUPER LIMITED-TIME OFFER! ★

Each of the above-mentioned back issues will be sold for \$1.02 each plus postage (73¢) or a total of \$1.75.

ALL BACK ISSUES NOT SOLD BY JANUARY 1, 1987 WILL BE TRASHED!

This is a great way for new members to fill in some issues they missed. Wives of new members (are you reading this?): what a great Christmas present for Hubby! If all issues are sold, we will have raised enough money for a new run of decals.

Happy New Year! Bill



A RAY OF HOPE



Below is a fine letter I received from Rick Wilson (#539) who lives about 15 miles north of me in Delaware, Ohio. Delaware is a pleasant county seat, the home of Ohio Wesleyan University; Garth's Auction (the premier antiques auction in the midwest, housed in an awesome 150-year-old stone barn); and (at the fairgrounds) the "Little Brown Jug," a trotting race that people interested in such things go wild over. While we have in the Club several dentists, so far as I know Rick is the only "certified dental technician" -- that's the guy who makes the crowns, dentures, bridges, etc. Unlike all of us office workers, these guys can't afford to mash fingers taking old cars apart. Think about that.

I'd like to report that progress on my '37-61 is coming along slowly. But at least it is coming along. For a long time I was quite depressed. I started a body-off restoration. For the past year and a half it seems all I've accomplished is to disassemble my car. Each month I'd see lots of beautiful cars in the "Torque Tube" and "Bugle," then I go out to the garage and look at the mess I've got out there.

When I first got the car I was very excited because I would look at it and inquire what a beautiful piece of machinery it would be when restored. (My wife thought I was crazy - and I believe she still thinks I'm crazy.)

Depression started setting in about halfway through disassembly. But now, a ray of hope. My engine is in the machine shop being fitted with new pistons, bearings, and valves. I'll be getting it back soon. Then I can actually start putting something together instead of taking it apart. Yes the excitement is returning. And I can hardly wait till the day I can slip behind the wheel of that marvelous machine. That day may still be a few years off. And if depression sets in it won't last long. Because the assembly process has begun, and I can actually see that marvelous machine taking shape.

My wife has been very patient and understanding about my obsession with this car. Her middle name is Ruth. So in her honor I nicknamed my car "Ruthie." Now I kid her about how someday I'll be able to look at both my Ruthies and say "You Look Ma-va-Lus."

Last spring I trekked all the way to a little town in eastern Virginia to haul back a '37-61 parts car which had sidemounts. After seeing the car, my father joined the growing population that think I'm crazy. So I proceeded to explain to him how hard sidemounts are to come by. Then an idea struck.

STORY and PHOTOS by RICK WILSON





"Ruthie" as originally found: not bad for a 48-year-old car.

You see my father (who is retired now) used to work for a company that employed fiberglass parts on the trucks they made. I asked him about the possibility of fabricating fiberglass wells that would be installed in non-welled fenders. He said making a mold for the wells would be relatively simple. But some sort of jig would be needed to position the well in the proper place on the fender. He also said that if enough people wanted these wells, they could be made at a reasonable price. Maybe we could take a poll of the members who might be interested.

Lastly, I'd like to say that there are probably many members out there who could help each other greatly in one way or another. I've been helped and I really appreciate it. I recently bought some parts from Tom Gentile (#130). He sold them to me at very reasonable prices. On top of that he took the time to make copies of technical data, and sent it to me, to help with installation of the parts he sold me. And then the man called me long distance to see how I was coming along. He even offered to purchase some materials for me in the event I couldn't get them locally. Now that's what I call helping a fellow member. Thanks Tom!

Well Bill I hope you can use some of what I've written. Enclosed find some pictures to use or not to use at your discretion.

Keep up the good work.

Rick Wilson

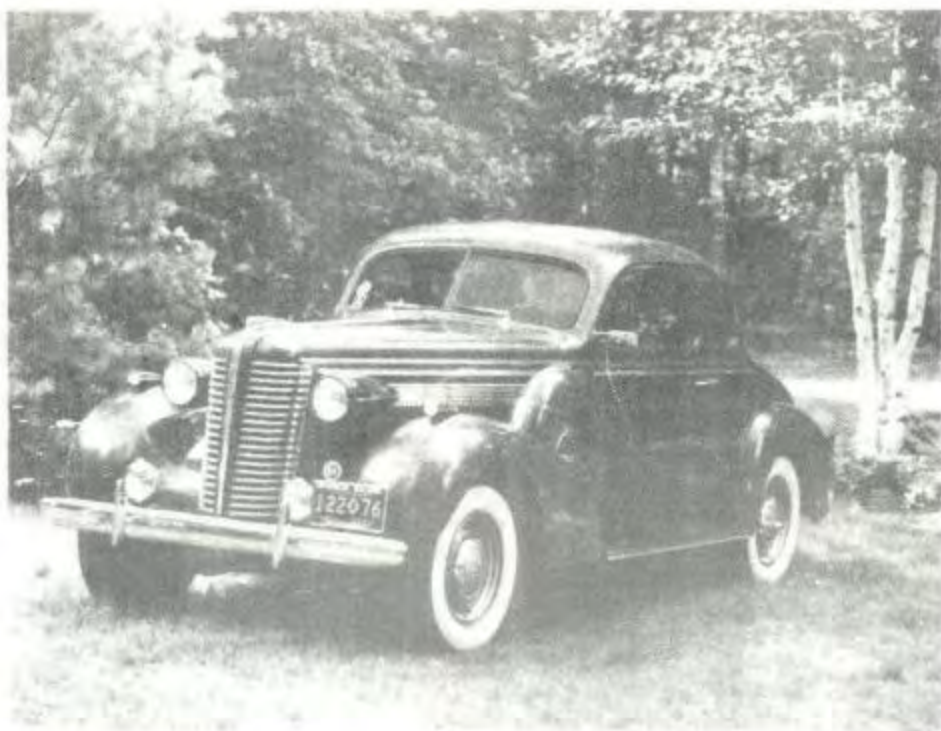
Rick makes a very good point: don't get discouraged. Keep at it, keep searching for the parts you need, and remember, this is a hobby and there aren't any deadlines. In the Editor's opinion, getting a whole car disassembled in a year and a half in one's spare time is a pretty darn good accomplishment. I have always been a little worried that all the photos of beautifully-restored cars, which I hoped would be inspirational, might in truth have the opposite effect. Don't conclude when you see a great car that it's all too much: do what you can, find someone to do what you can't, and don't give up hope.

Rick's letter and his father's thoughts about duplicating fender wells also reminded me that last year John Hapley (#044; Bow, Washington) told us he would try to work up a method for making the wells and covers out of fiberglass. I called John. He apologized for not having made much progress because of many other demands on his time, but was optimistic about getting the molds done this winter. Rick's father has been put on "hold" while we see how John comes out. As Rick points out, the trick is going to be locating the wells on the fenders and figuring out a method of attaching them.



It's a parts car, all right. "You drove all the way to Virginia with a trailer for that?" I don't see what Rick's wife was so upset about. There's all sorts of good stuff on that car.

A Knack for Survival



STORY & PHOTOS by BILL VANDER HOVEN

My '38 model 46 was in a Ludington, Michigan junkyard when I first saw it. A few years earlier an elderly farmer had given it to his grandson, but after several years of barn storage the car would not run, and the grandson, tired of seeing it sit useless, sold it to the junkyard. I saw it advertised and drove to inspect it. The body was straight, the upholstery very good, and all the parts were there except a few small items like hubcaps, windshield wipers, etc.

The man's price was not my buying price and not even my looking price. But after a fairly long discussion it became increasingly clear it was his price, and if I wanted the car not a dime less than that price would change hands.

That much changed hands.

The next day I came with my family car to tow it home, a distance of 120 miles.

That was one of the more memorable drives I've taken. The coupe had three flat tires and no spare as it sat. We blew up the tires and they seemed to hold air. He tossed in an extra wheel with a blown-up tire. My son and I hitched it to the tow bar, and we were off as a Michigan blizzard began to blow in. As we drove, the highway became slippery, and the Buick began to fishtail a bit. That was bad enough; but then one of the tires blew. We replaced it with the spare. By now the blizzard was a storm indeed. About 10 miles further down the road we felt a jar in the big 98 Olds, almost as if we had been hit from behind, and that's what I thought had happened. I slowed down and pulled towards the shoulder. As I did so, the left front wheel of the Buick went rolling by, down the center line of the two-lane highway, and headed straight towards a Rambler which suddenly loomed up out of the storm. The picture of what could happen flashed through my mind as vividly as if it had happened. By the mercies of God, the wheel made a beautiful curve off to the front of my now almost stopped Olds, and ran itself into the ditch. We borrowed lugs from the other three wheels, remounted the errant wheel, and were off again. Finally we reached home, and pushed the coupe into the garage. I don't think I even looked at it for the next three months.

Now we'll skip a few years. The coupe is finally running well. I painted it a beautiful Van Dyke brown, which as far as I have been able to ascertain was used by Buick only in 1938. The car was featured in the Buick Bugle in its "1938" issue, and took the trophy in a local (45-car) show. We took it on several club tours and a couple of delightful family vacations.

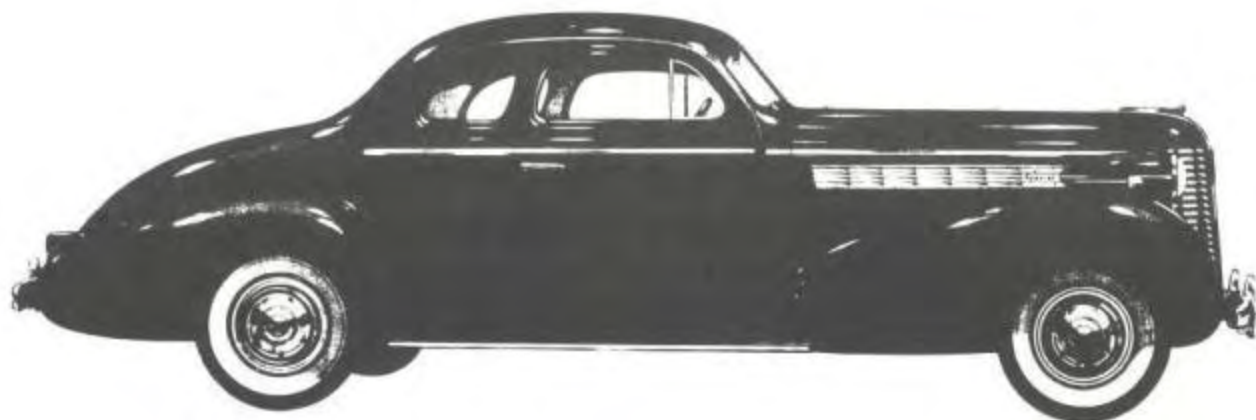
Then a set-back. I took it to make my hospital calls* one day as my wife needed the Olds. Coming home, I was sideswiped by a car changing lanes, and the entire driver's side, bumper to bumper, was damaged. Well, I thought, we will make a virtue of necessity: I had always dreamed of someday installing sidemounts, and thought this might be the time. After a couple of months of searching I located a pair, complete with all hardware, and the body shop then proceeded to repair the car and repaint it, again Van Dyke brown. We continued a couple of happy years of enjoying "Old Gus."

Then another set-back. We had planned a tour of the Smokies in the spring of '86. In prepping the car for the tour we discovered a large crack in the block. At this point Del Carpenter, known to many of you, enters the picture. In his shop we removed the engine and had it boiled and fluxed. Three more cracks were found. We decided the block was garbage. "Use it to make a table lamp" said Del.

Del probably knows every Buick in Michigan, and in a good many states besides; but even he didn't know where we'd find a block in the near future, and though he had several big blocks in his shop, he had no series 40's. "The worst of it is," he said, "that while we're wasting the summer away trying to locate a block you'll be without a car to drive."

*Bill is a clergyman - Ed.





I left the coupe in Del's barn with the front clip on the floor beside it, and we began the search for a block.

A month or so later Del phoned. "Are you going to the show Saturday?" he asked.

"No, I have nothing to drive and hadn't thought of going."

"Well, do you suppose you could drive a car for me? I have three to go, and I need one more driver."

"I'll be glad to," I said, and arranged to be at his place the next morning.

When I arrived he said: "Either you can drive this '35, or I'll get one out of the barn for you." Now my wife and I had dated in my Dad's beautiful '35 when it was new, and for sentiment's sake I said: "I'd like to drive the '35."

"OK," he said. "Help me get another one out of the barn."

As we walked into the barn I was surprised to see the clip back on my '38, but supposed he had set it on loose to make room for one of his other cars. Then he got into the '38, and the next thing I heard was the typical sound of a Buick starter, and an engine came to life under the hood.

"What have you done" I yelled.

He grinned like a lion full of zebra and said: "You still want to drive the '35?"

What he had done was locate a '40 engine that had been used for many years to run a sawmill, but which had been discarded and replaced by a newer V-8. He bought it, and with some work on the carb got it running. He then mounted it in my '38. In so doing he had to switch timing chain covers, to compensate for the front mounting on the '38. Making further adjustments on the engine he discovered that the firing order was all wrong, though it ran well. Someone had at one time installed the rotor 180° off, and instead of correcting the mistake had gone the hard way, and experimented with cobbling another firing order.

When I recovered from shock I asked Del what I owed him.

"I don't know" he said, "and I don't want to know. The only thing is, the engine is mine, for you to use til we can get you set up permanently."

A month later came an unexpected surprise. Dr. Ben Birkbeck had a '41 Super parts car in the grass beside his barn. I could have the block if I'd dismantle the engine and return all but the block to him. This I was delighted to do. The block was sent out for reboring and is beautiful. Meanwhile we inspected the crankshaft from the '38 (which I assumed would interchange with the '41) and decided to have it ground. It was also decided that, since we were going to so much trouble and expense, we should go a little farther and convert to insert rods. Mike Carmody had a '49 Super parts cars. (The only insert rods, as far as I know, which can be interchanged with the babbit rods in the Buicks of the 1930's are rods from the '49 and '50 Supers. Does anyone know otherwise?)* Rare though they are, Mike would part with the rods, and it seemed the engine could not be built up.

Now some of you, like Dave Lewis, may be smiling already. I, who am not exactly Boss Kettering when it comes to mechanics, assumed that, since Buick used that basic block for many years -- I don't even know how many -- the internal parts would interchange. I now know that the '41 Super block has a rear slinger, which the '38 does not, and that the rear seal is altogether different.

I stood looking at those mismatched parts before me, and wondered whether Old Gus would ever run again. Where could I find a '41 crank? Dr. Birkbeck had very kindly, but firmly, stated he wanted to keep everything from the '41 except the block. I didn't dare presume to speak to him about the crank. The crank in Mike's '49 wouldn't fit, since that was a dynaflo.

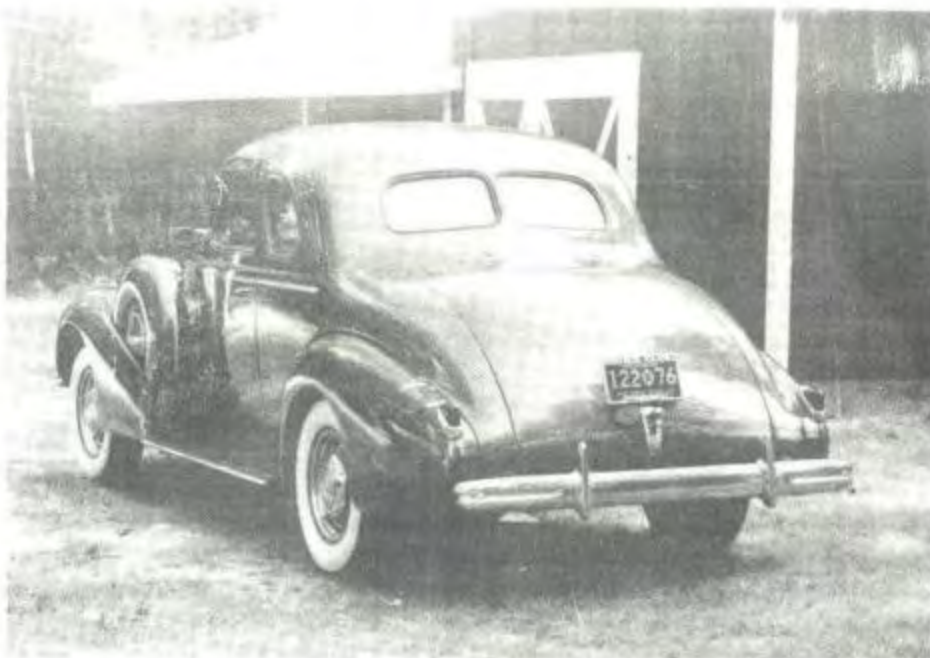
But Mike suggested speaking to Dr. Birkbeck in spite of my reluctance. And then, with a generosity far beyond anything I'd dared to hope, he said: "Yes, you may have the crank too. The only thing I insist on is that then you have the engine balanced." At this writing the crank is scheduled for grinding.

Considering all Old Gus has gone through since some frustrated grandson dragged it to the junkyard, I'd have to say old '38's have a knack for survival.

But mainly I wanted to write this little report to thank publicly the men I've mentioned. Mike's good will, the countless hours Del spent locating and installing the sawmill engine, Ben's generosity, have to be honored. There still are men of this caliber in the world, and in Buick clubs. I salute you, my friends.

*This was covered in last month's upgrade and interchange material, in which Bob Pipkin advised that 1949-50 series 40 and 1949 series 50 (Super) rods are the ones to use in converting 1937-48 series 40 and 50 engines to insert bearings. These rods have become scarce. -- Editor.





Our thanks to Bill for a very entertaining story about "Old Gus." Our thanks also to all his friends who helped him get back on the road. That's what this hobby is all about.

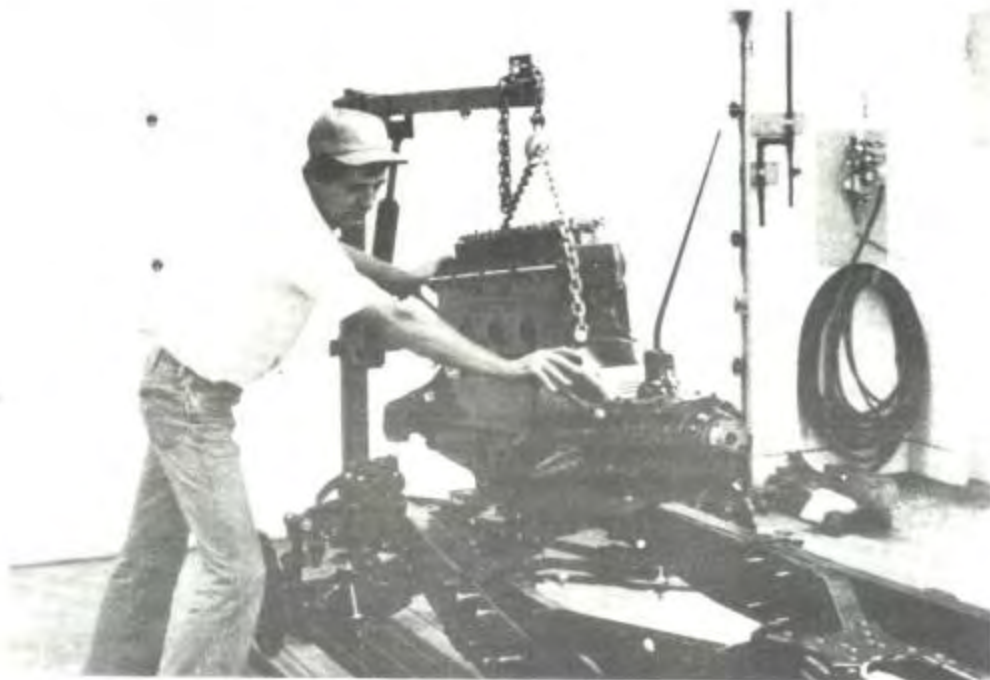
Those of you who are sharp-eyed will have noticed that Gus's headlight rims are painted; that of course is not right, but we can overlook it. I gather a "sealed-beam" conversion was done on the car many moons ago, and it looks like some different rims were put on at that time.

Since my search for them began last summer, a few cars in some of the more unusual colors have come forward. Bill is the only member I have found thus far with a brown car. In the photos, which were in color, it looked great against the background of grass and trees. Those of you who have wondered where Buick got the names for its 1938 colors: they are all named for famous painters. I once spent an evening with as many art history books as I could find on short notice ("World Famous Paintings"; "Great Art Through the Ages"; that sort of thing) trying to find some connection between each of the artists for whom a Buick color was named and that color. I finally gave up, concluding that either the names were picked at random or purely for their sound, or the connection is too subtle for me. Bill spelled the 1938 brown "Van Dyke" but Buick spelled it "Van Dyck." Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641) was a Flemish (Belgian) painter who spent a large part of his life in England where his name was Anglicized to "Vandyke." Unlike all the other '38 Buick colors, "Van Dyke Brown" (so spelled) actually is a recognized color: one can go down to the art store and buy a tube, although I believe it is considerably darker than the Buick shade.

Tired of trivia? Me, too. Thanks again to Bill Vander Hoven for a great story, as well as five "Attaboys" for a brown car.

- Bill

EVOLUTION -2



THE DAVE LEWIS "COMPOUND"

A few issues back, we got into the subject of architecture -- that is, garages, shops, and the like, which all too often seem to be the natural outgrowth of working on antique cars. After all, as was noted then, once one gets into restoring a car (or two), one needs tools, and then more and bigger tools, and a place to keep the tools, and some room to work, not to mention room to put all the parts of the car (or cars) after it (or they) have been taken apart, plus all the stuff one has bought at swap meets or junkyards that may or may not fit the car (or cars). And then of course there are the parts cars. Thus, as from little acorns mighty oaks spring, so from a 43-year-old car in need of some attention sprang whole buildings and more besides.

In 1980 Dave Lewis had an auto repair and tire business in Springfield, Illinois. He inherited a 1937 Buick that his father had found abandoned on the street (with, believe it or not, a signed title certificate in the glove box) and taken home many years before. Dave decided to restore the car, the first one he had ever done. From that decision sprang many things, including the beginning of this Club. Since the story has been told at least twice before, we will not repeat it in detail now. Suffice it to say that Dave sold his business and with it the simian (look that up!) employees that continually plagued him, and became a professional car restorer.



Dave had purchased some property on the outskirts of the city with the idea of building some apartments as an investment, and had already put in a drive and a four-car garage in which to store maintenance equipment. Abandoning the apartment project, after a little work with the zoning board he put up a new house on one side of the property, converted half the garage to an office, and then added a fantastic shop to one side of the garage. This shop has everything in it except hot and cold running barmaids, including a hydraulic lift and a complete paint room. A nice stockade fence hides the parts cars. Now Dave gets up when he feels like it, walks to work, comes home for lunch and watches the "soaps" on TV, works on old cars all day and half the night, and is happy as a pig in you-know-what. Envy not thy neighbor, friends: envy Dave Lewis. When he does it, it's done right!



Original garage with new house at left.



Conversion of garage underway.



Shop under construction.



Finished product. I believe Dave's wife made him put that body shell out in back.



TECHNICAL TIPS



SEALED~BEAM CONVERSION

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY ROSS McCONNELL - OAKVILLE, ONTARIO

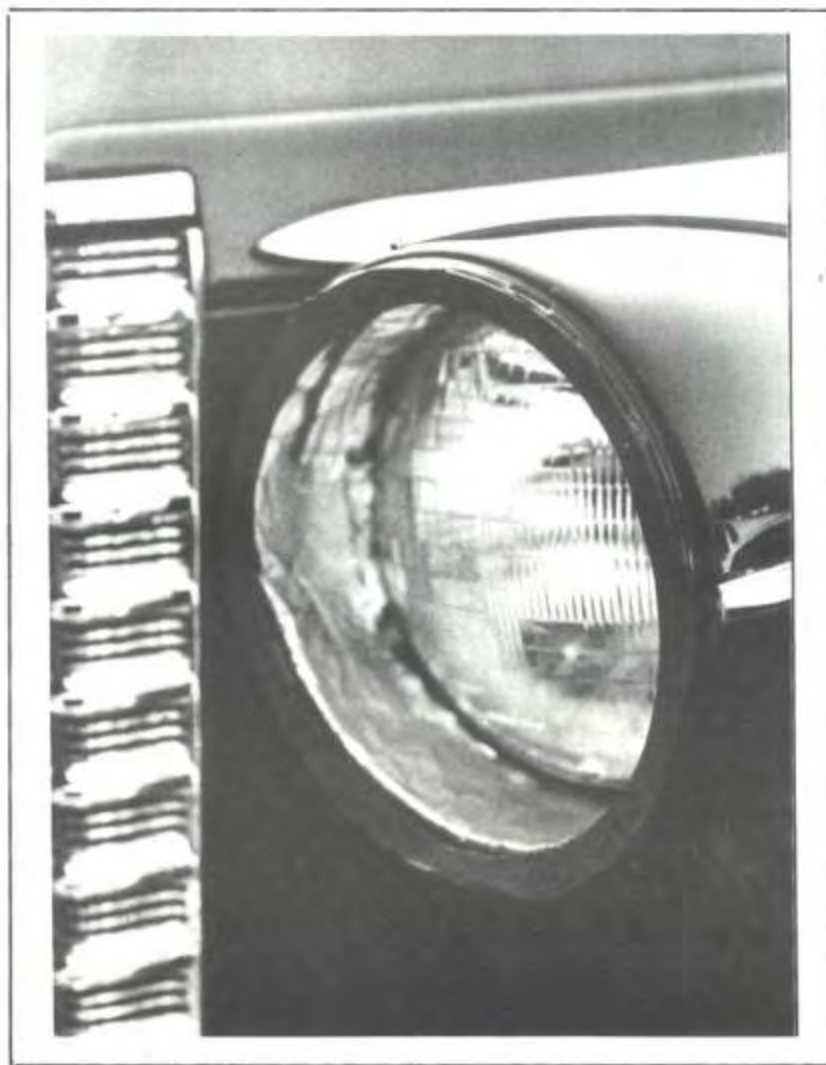
I have converted my 1938 Special's headlights to 6-volt sealed beams, but retained the stock lenses. When I purchased my car (licensed up to 1969) it was "fitted" with sealed beam conversions from the 1940's which were ugly, and the original bulbs, lenses and control arms were long gone.

I elected to try the trick of placing a 6-volt sealed beam inside the light pod. The trick of course was to find a modern retainer small enough to fit inside the pod. I found a Thunderbird socket holder system was small enough to fit sufficiently far back in the pod itself (about 3 inches) to allow for the sealed beam unit and leave the pod drain hole open. As long as the bulb holder is small enough to fit inside the pod, no particular make is required. I found just taking the whole light assembly to a parts dealer and trial and error fitting worked.

The next trick was to get the socket assembly to hold in position. I made three metal right-angle holding clips which I attached to the sockets with sheet metal screws and then had this "assembly" spot welded in position. This is where you have to find a welder that either is mad about old cars or just plain mad.

If care is taken not to apply too much heat, the pod won't warp out of shape. Needless to say, this exercise is performed before prep and painting. I used G.E. 6-volt headlight bulbs, still manufactured by Canadian General Electric in Oakville for forklifts and export. Electrical connectors have to be plastic clip-on types of course, but this all hidden inside the pod. The wiring comes out through the door in the side panels and is connected to the headlight terminals. Trial and error, mostly a lot of error, gets the high beam, low beam and ground in the right order to comply with that crazy thermal breaker light switch. The sealed unit itself had a bad habit of moving out of position, throwing the headlight alignment out, as there is not enough room in the pod itself to put on today's version of screw aligners. Good old pressure sensitive insulation foam strip from the neighborhood lumber store seems to do the trick. Not very sophisticated, but they hold and

allow for a few tries at alignment. They also give a type of shock absorbence to the unit itself. After the outside lens is fitted you cannot see them. This brings up the question, can you see the sealed beam unit behind the outside lens? Nobody to this date including the usual "correct type" nitpickers have spotted them. If you look intently into the lens in bright sunshine you can just make out the different lens inside. Which brings up another question. The science of refractory lenses comes into play here where you are directing one lens into another. I haven't checked the candlepower rating, but I can see, I am sure, much better in the dark than with bulbs.



I have been told that sealed beams draw more battery power than bulbs, but many of these cars operated on sealed beams into the 1950's with, I am sure, some pretty rough batteries and wiring systems.

I have enclosed photos of the completed package, so to speak. Maybe they will shed some light on the procedure.





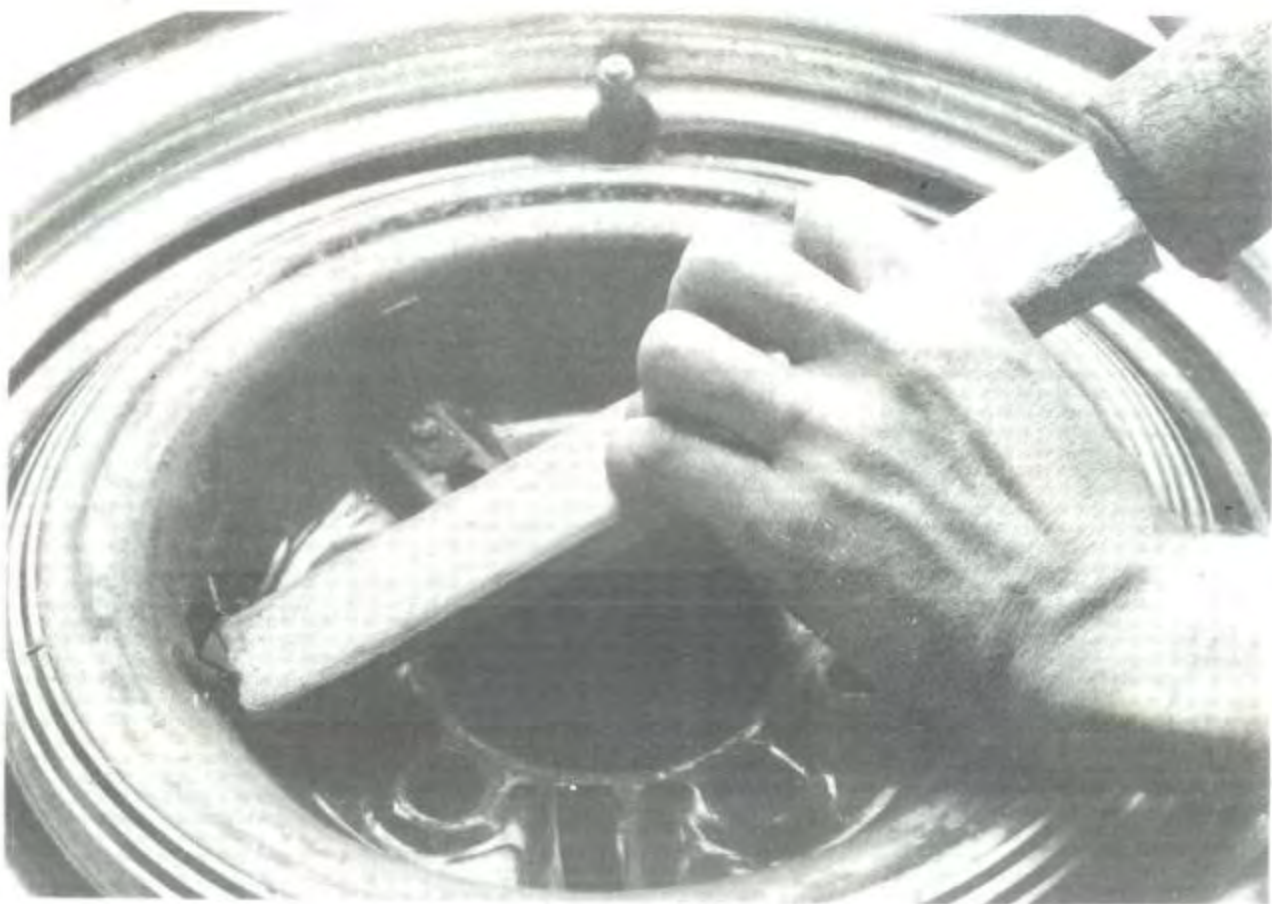
The Editor has an article which appeared originally in the now-defunct *Rod & Custom* in 1973, which shows, step-by-step, a similar conversion using '65 Buick sealed beam bulb holders. This is rather more complex and sophisticated, but does not require any welding. Due to some anticipated problems in reproducing this article, I have not tried to reprint it. Any member may have a photocopy on request, with SASE please. Ross McConnell raises an interesting question concerning the effects of placing a sealed beam lens behind the original lens. Lenses are of course designed to create certain light patterns; that's what all those lines and rectangles are for. Besides cutting down the brightness a bit (but probably not much), two lenses will create patterns not what the designers of either intended. Whether this makes any real practical difference or not, I cannot say. Any experts in lighting or optics among us?



FIVE-PASSENGER FOUR-DOOR SEDAN

Model No. 61, Trunk back

Those Pesky Wheel Clips



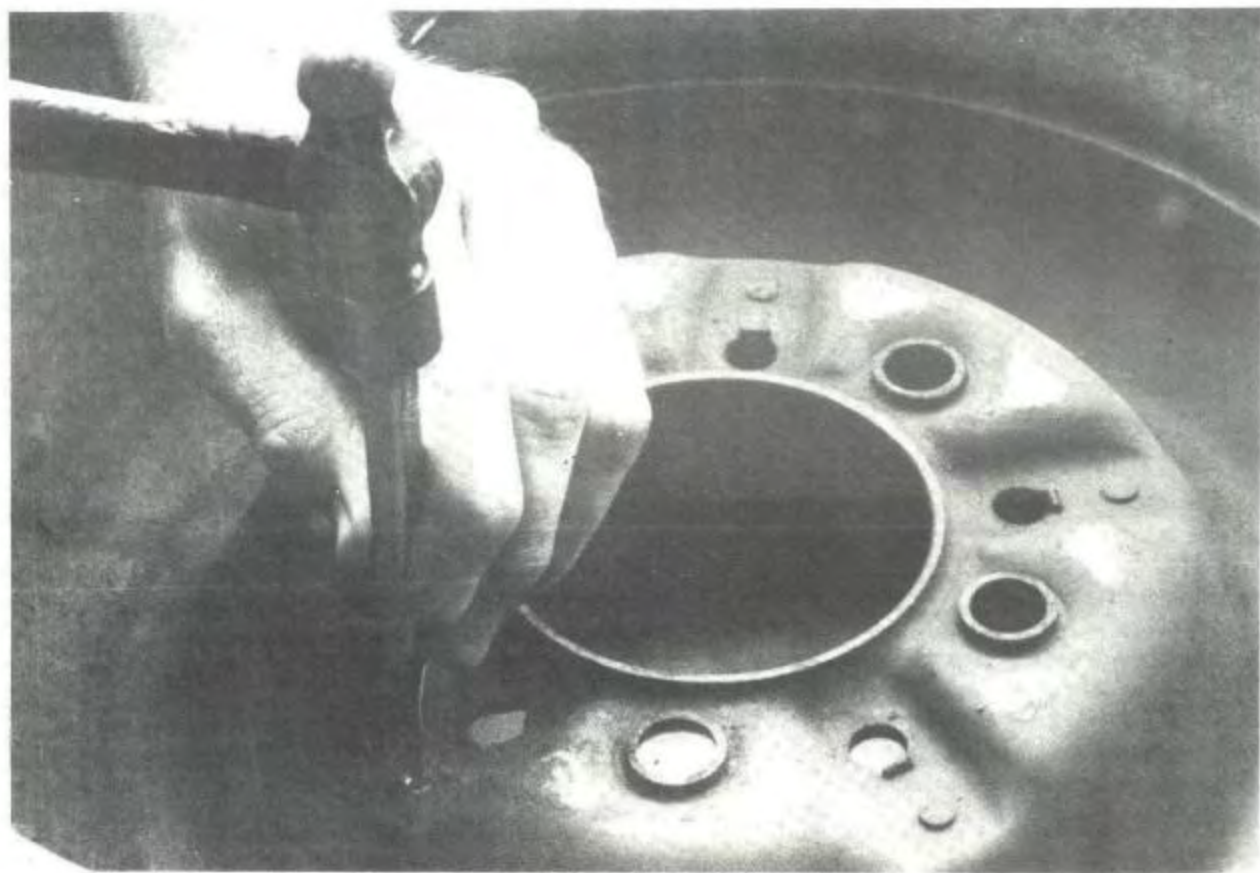
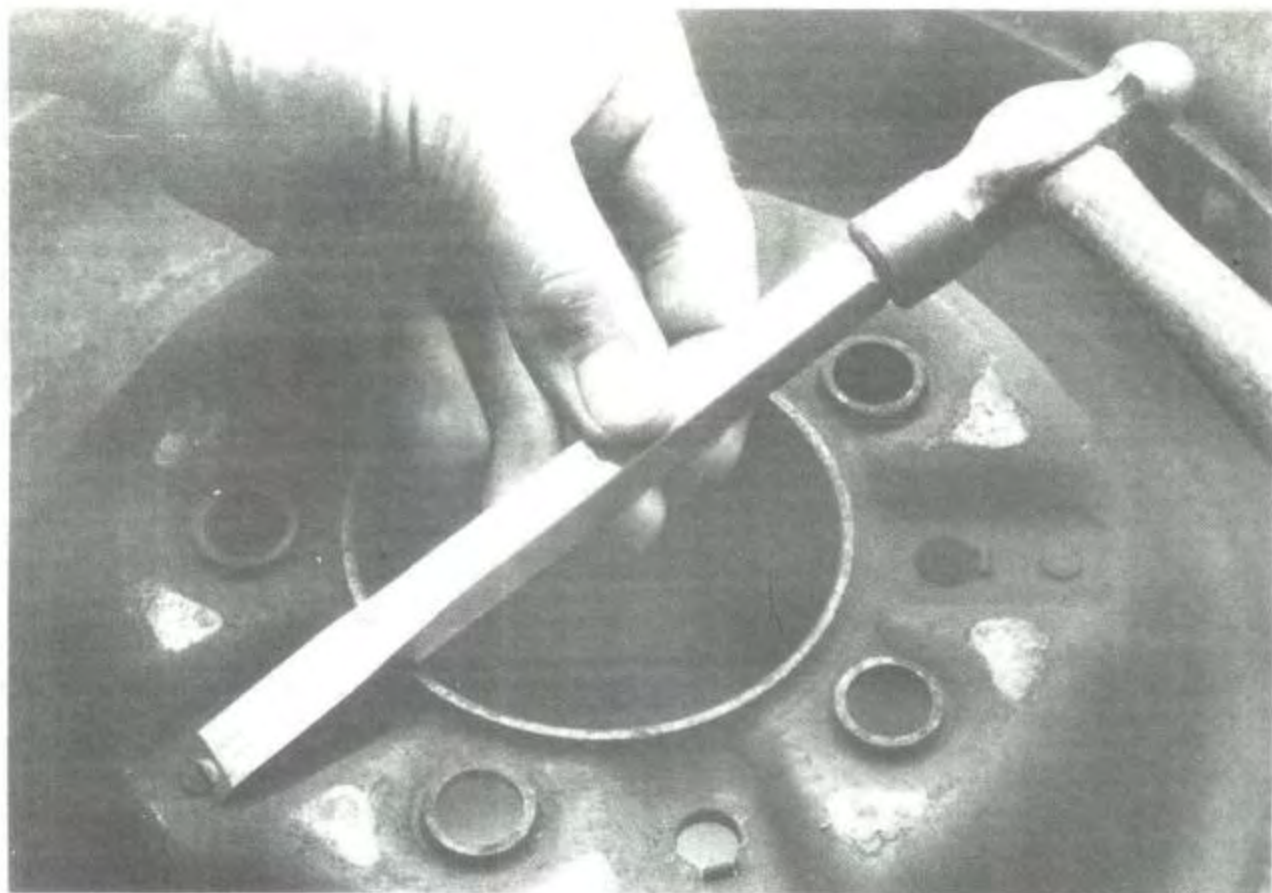
ANOTHER ONE FROM THE MASTER OF OBSCURE REPAIRS -- PAUL CULP

When wheel clips break or lose their tension, those beautiful \$60 repro hubcaps your wife gave you for Christmas can go flying off into dent-and-scratch-ville! Periodic inspection of the clips is a good idea. Sometimes all that is needed is a minor adjustment with block and hammer. (See photo above.)

If adjustment fails, it is time for R&R ("remove and replace"). Until someone makes and sells replacement clips, we have two choices: make our own from heat-treated spring steel, which presumably is beyond the capability of almost everyone; or rob some from an old wheel. Since there seem to be plenty of wheels around, and the same clips were used on many different models, the second method is our solution.

Remove the clip by using a cold chisel or hand grinder on the rivet. Work on the inside of the wheel. Hammer out the rivets using a drive punch, on both the good wheel and the "parts" wheel.





The hole diameter of the wheel and clip is $13/64$ or .203. The rivets that were used measure .208: a tight fit. If you can find some rivets of the right size, fine; however, that is not necessary. I have used two methods. If you have access to an inert gas welder (TIG or MIG), you can re-use the old rivets by applying a small weld after driving the rivet in from the outside of the wheel. Be careful to use a few short applications so as not to overheat the clip and anneal it. Another way is to use a 10-32 x $3/8$ round head steel machine screw and hex nut. After tightening the nut, cut the screw off about $1/32$ above the nut and then peen the end of the screw over the nut. This makes a "do-it-yourself" rivet that works; just make sure you don't exceed the available clearance between the inside of the wheel and the brake drum. The photo shows two clips and removed rivets; the clips should be cleaned up with rust remover and a wire wheel.



Once the clip is installed some minor adjustment may be needed. A few controlled taps with a hammer will set the tension. As the road wheel turns, the introduction of centrifugal force creates additional tension of the clips against the hubcap. This is comforting, at least in theory, but we should remember that the wheels flex, especially when potholes or objects in the road are hit suddenly. It's good to have those hubcaps on tight.

MORE MYSTERIES



FOLDING TOP WINDOWS

The article in Issue 1 concerning Guy Bennett's 1937 convertible coupe apparently generated some interest in convertible top windows. Through a December 1936 photo of this car in its original condition, Guy established that the back window was a sort of semi-elliptical shape with a center vertical division bar. This got John Steed (#132); Greenwood, Indiana) thinking about these windows. Here is John's recent letter to me.

Bill

I read with great interest your comments on the back window in Guy Bennett's convertible coupe. At the '86 BCA National I met a man who said that the convertible coupe has a window as in your drawing without the center bar while the convertible sedan has a rear window with the bar. I compared this to the pictures in the 1937-1938 Fisher Body Manual of Construction and Service pages 25-26. On these pages are instructions on how to fold convertible tops. The coupe pictures a window without the bar and the sedan pictures the window with the bar. So until I read your article I thought I had the window situation figured out.

After reading your article I decided to do some more research. I looked through my owner's manuals and catalogs for '37 and '38 and found nothing. Then I looked at several pictures of convertible coupes that I had taken. I found three pictures of convertible coupes that showed the rear window; one rectangular, and two with the window without the bar. One was a 1936, the other a 1938. I didn't have any pictures of windows with the bar nor do I recall ever seeing a window with the bar until the '86 National. I also found a 1938 convertible sedan picture with the window without the bar. I discussed my concern with Dick DerMarderosian, Tony Romero and Dave Lewis

at Hershey this past weekend. Dick used a Buick parts book to show me that the 1937-66C should have a window with a bar. (I believe he proved that the replacement part is a window with a bar but not necessarily that the original had a bar.) Tony stated that his 1937-46C appeared to have the original rectangular window. Dave stated that he has always found original windows to have the bar. I must admit that this is fairly good evidence for your assertion, but I'm not convinced.* I believe that Buick must have generally used the window without the bar in convertible coupes and the window with the bar in convertible sedans. They must have switched from time to time if they ran out of one or the other. I think they only carried or at least listed the window with the bar for parts. All of this seems to explain the various answers I have received and makes common business sense. I have seen several convertibles that didn't have the bar. I have a hard time accepting the fact that all of these cars have discarded the original window and been able to replace it with a very difficult to obtain GM window that doesn't have the bar.**

Now I must admit that I did not have the correct rear window for my 1937-66C. So one of my main goals at Hershey was to find one. I found two windows at Hershey without the bar and none with the bar. One was from a 1937 Pontiac convertible coupe and the other was unknown. Needless to say I bought the cheaper one figuring that it is better to have a window that may be correct than the incorrect rectangular one. Maybe we can get some more light shed on this subject by other members. I'm sure that I do not know the complete answer. A friend of mine told me that Buick did not manufacture cars for restoration. They made them to sell and used what they had at hand. I know this is true in recent years. I expect it was true in '37-'38. Guy's information proves the division bar was correct. Can anyone prove the no bar window correct and for what models?

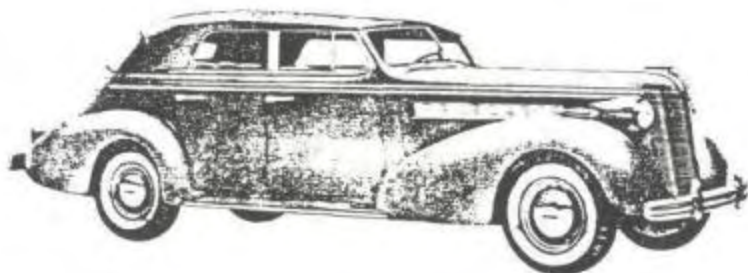
Thanks,
John Steed



*Editor's Note: I did not say that all '37 convertible coupes had the divided window, only that Guy Bennett's car had that window originally.

**Editor's Second Note: In my view, there is no sound reason to conclude that any car seen today has its original window -- even Guy Bennett's does not -- or that any top or part thereof seen today on any 1930's GM car is a GM top or part. "After-market" tops were, and are, widely available in a variety of styles, including a variety of windows. There is no reason to suppose that when tops were replaced the original windows were kept, or that any given restorer gave thought to correctness of back windows. There are, after all, many incorrect restorations.





I must admit that, not having a convertible myself, I never thought much about the windows in the tops. It would seem, however, that the subject is perhaps more mysterious than we might have supposed, and deserving of further study.

I consulted the Club's 1928-46 Master Body Parts book (unfortunately we do not have the body parts book for 1928-38, which might be more informative). As John points out, this lists, under Group 13.393 ("FRAME, Folding top back curtain glass") a part #4073133 for the 1936 and 1937 models 46C, 66C and 80C: outer frame, "with division." It lists no frame whatever for the 40C and the 60C. So far as it goes, this appears to indicate there was no distinction between coupes and sedans since the '37 Roadmaster sedan gets the same window as the Special and Century coupes. However, as John also points out, this is a replacement part listed as of late 1945, and does not necessarily tell us what the originals were. And we are left in the dark altogether as to the 1937 Special (40C) and Century (60C) sedans. Going on to 1938, we find one outer frame listed (#4084055) for the '38 and '39 Special and Century coupes (together with a corresponding inner frame); we also find another frame listed (#4096015) for the three sedans. The latter is not broken down into outer and inner frames, but is one unit. Only with the '36-'37 part is there the entry "with division." To round things out, here are the 1945 prices: '36-'37 inner-\$2.25; '36-'37 outer-\$4.40; '38-'39 inner-\$2.00; '38-'39 outer-\$3.50; '38-'39 one unit-\$7.25. All of this appears to indicate that: (1) 1937 windows were different from 1938; (2) only 1937 windows had the division bar, but maybe not on all models; (3) 1938 coupes had different windows from 1938 sedans. The emphasis must be on "appears." Even after these exercises, nothing can be said with real certainty, except this:

OLSON'S THIRD LAW: GENERALIZATIONS ARE DANGEROUS!!

OLSON'S FOURTH LAW: PERFECT AUTHENTICITY IS A WILL O' THE WISP!!

However important it may seem to find clear answers, to nail things down, "authenticity" and "historical accuracy" seem always to dance before us, as the fair maiden on the Grecian Urn, forever out of reach. Especially with convertible top windows.

Now, does anyone know any more about this? It intrigues me. And, while we're at it, how about this: there were, I believe, three colors of tops in 1937 and 1938: black, tan, and blue (or maybe "blue-gray"). Does anyone know what color top went with each color body? Was this standardized, or were there variations, as -- apparently -- with the top windows? The 1938 color sales brochure shows four convertibles: the 80C, 46C and 40C are beige with tan tops; the 60C is green with a tan top; and the 66C is brown (or maybe beige) with a tan top. This doesn't get us very far, especially since we have previously concluded that the brochure, for several reasons, ought not to be considered authoritative. What is known -- or believed -- about this? Please share it if you have it.

-Bill



QUESTIONS



QUESTION. I am having trouble with overheating. What thermostat should I use? The water bypass valve described in Vol. IV, Issue 7 is missing from my car. Where can I find one of these? Is it possible to fabricate one?

ANSWER. There are of course several possible reasons for overheating, and we will not deal here with all of the possibilities. The late 1930's Buick cooling system was a bit marginal, and must have given some trouble back in the days of water in the summer and alcohol in the winter. Today we can use ethylene glycol coolants year-round, which solves the boil-over problem with cooling systems in decent condition. Good thermostats can be obtained from several sources: one such source is any large NAPA store. The NAPA thermostat catalog lists Buicks back to 1933 (gaskets, also) and you have your choice of a low temperature thermostat, which opens at 150-160 degrees, or higher temperature at 170-180 degrees. Which you use is a matter of choice. The Editor uses the low temperature with no problems, while Dave Lewis prefers the 180-degree thermostat. No car should be run without a thermostat: the circulation will be too fast for adequate coolant time in the radiator. Likewise, absence of the water bypass valve interferes with design circulation and can cause engines to run hot. If the valve has been removed, or is stuck open, too much coolant can bypass the radiator. The Editor has looked through numerous modern parts books, and found no replacement for the bypass valve. However, the same part was used in all Buicks 1936 through at least 1949, so it should not be too difficult to find. The body of the valve is a rather complex casting, and we expect that would be virtually impossible to duplicate. The valve itself, inside the body, could probably be fabricated, but one would need to know the correct spring tension. It would doubtless be very helpful to have an intact valve to copy. We conclude by saying that many radiators could probably benefit from either a rodding-out or, in worse cases, a re-core. Some specialists in this work advertise in Hemmings; however, any good auto radiator shop in a fair-size city can do the work. (Some are reluctant to take on old cars: the trick is to find one run by a guy about 60 and flatter him, or by a guy about 25 who'll tackle anything.)

QUESTION. What is the best remedy for rattling doors (over bumps in the road)? Now that I have new rear shocks, this has become much more noticeable.



ANSWERS BY DAVE LEWIS AND BILL OLSON

ANSWER. First determine whether it is the doors themselves or something inside the doors. If the former, try adjusting the latch striker plate, or install the rubber bumpers that fit between door and frame. We suspect the problem is loose windows. This may be cured by replacing the fabric-lined channels the windows run in, the anti-rattle rollers, and/or (on '37 closed cars) the little rubber bumpers that fit into slots on the door and garnish moldings. All these parts may be purchased from the Lynn Steele catalog. The channel may also be obtained from auto glass firms. There are other things that might be loose inside the doors, but we think the windows are the most probable cause.

QUESTION. What are the correct spark plugs for '37 and '38 Buicks? Is there any reason to use the new "platinum" or "copper core" plugs?

ANSWER. Plugs are considerably different between the two years. On 1937 engines they have 18mm threads and a 7/8 in. hexagon, whereas the 1938 plugs have 14mm threads and a 13/16 in. hexagon. (A deep, thin-wall 7/8 in. socket is very handy for '37 plugs because the socket tends to get hung up in the block.) The Editor has used AC C-86 plugs in his '37 with no problems. These plugs have been made for decades, and the "86" designation has been used since 1938; they are now in the AC "commercial" line. The AC 46 plug, specified in the manuals and parts books for 1938 cars, is also still made, and from all accounts works fine. Corresponding Champion plugs can be found using cross-reference tables or the books available at any large NAPA store. Choosing between AC and Champion is, in the Editor's view, about like choosing between Pepsi and Coke: each has its strong adherents, but a lot of people don't care one way or the other. We see no reason whatever to use fancy state-of-the-art plugs designed for fancy state-of-the-art electronic ignition systems. They won't work any better and may very well not work as well. There is much difference between modern breakerless 12-volt systems (some of which, incidentally, use plug gaps as wide as .080) and the old stuff, as the Editor discovered when he tried out carbon-fiber ignition wires. When it comes to plugs and wires, stick with the old proven products and save your money.

QUESTION. What causes excessive blow-by at the breather pipe -- the suspension and brake drum are wet with oil. I am using a quart of oil every 150 miles, although the car does not appear to smoke excessively. Compression readings are 115. Do I need a ring job?

ANSWER. Yes! Sorry to say, we think it's tear-down time. Your oil rings are bad. Although the compression readings you get are not bad, that may be because: (a) your compression rings are still fairly good; or (b) you are getting enough oil on the cylinder walls at cranking speed to give a reading that high. Any engine blowing that much oil out the breather pipe, and which does not have leaks bad enough to otherwise account for the oil loss, has serious problems and should be rebuilt.

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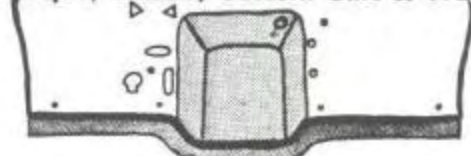


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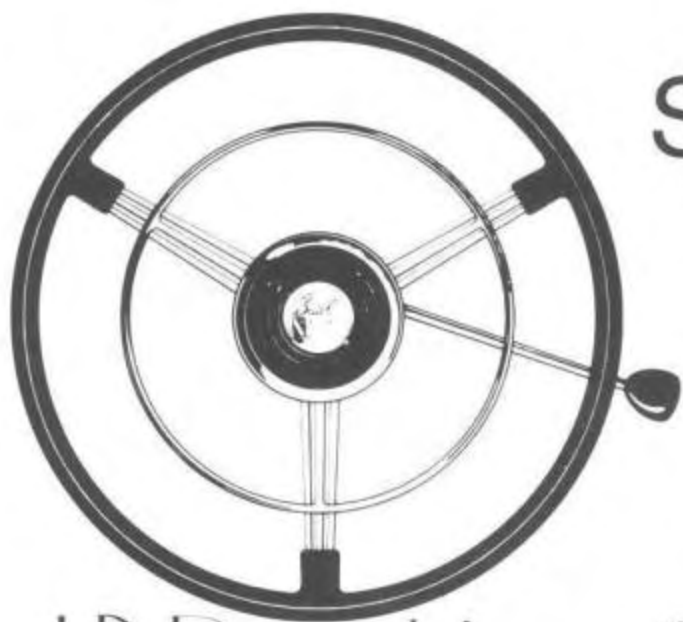
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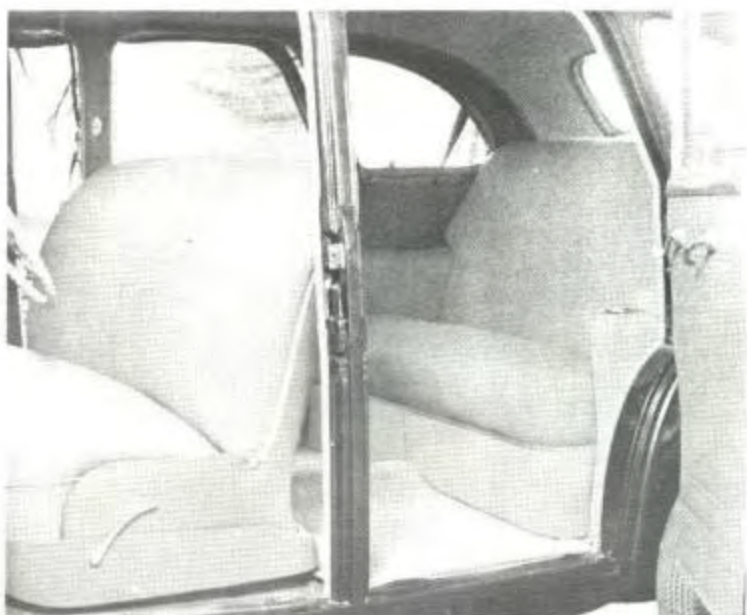
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Portland, OR 97220
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Alexander Kohl (#608)
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Ed Meurer (#609)
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John Dobbins (#610)
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ROSTER



The 1987 Club Roster is being prepared by Mike Vosganian (#447) of Woodland Hills, California. It should be ready sometime in December. Rather than include it in Issues 3 and 4, as was done last year, I have decided -- tentatively -- to print the Roster as a separate booklet. This should make reference to it easier. All paid-up members as of about mid-November 1986 will be included. If you joined or renewed after that: sorry, there must be some kind of a deadline and we can't work miracles. Remember, every minute of effort put into Club affairs is volunteer spare-time labor. Thanks again to Mike for a great job.

CAR WANTED. I am looking for a four-door sedan -- Century, Roadmaster or Limited.

ED MEURER, JR. (#609)
24000 Research Drive
Farmington Hills, MI 48024
313/348-2109 home
313/478-8760 ofc.

CAR WANTED



CARS FOR SALE



CAR FOR SALE: 1938 Century opera coupe, model 66S. Original unrestored car. No rust, excellent body and fenders. Dual sidemounts; radio; DeLuxe heater; accessory bumper guard. Car is complete down to the sidemount locks. \$7500 firm.

H.LEE HOPKINS (#013)
P.O.Box 1046
Orland, CA 95963-1046
916/865-8111 after 6 PM, PST

CAR FOR SALE: 1937 BUICK 40. New engine overhaul professionally done. Body 20% restored. Many spare and NOS parts. Love it, but finishing the car is too much for me. \$3000

J.P.ULRICH
3915 Wilshire Ave.
San Mateo, CA 94403
415/345-9191 Call anytime.

CAR FOR SALE: 1938 Century 2-door sedan, model 68. Welled fenders; engine free; restorable; no title. First \$800 gets it.

ALBERT McMICHAEL (#319)
424 Temple Court
Woodbury Heights, NJ 08097
609/845-1631

CAR FOR SALE: 1937 Roadmaster. Dual sidemounts. 100% complete except for jack handle & tools. Body is a 10. Everything is rebuilt. Running boards re-vulcanized; new glass & rubber. Radio; clock; DeLuxe heater & defroster--all work. Lots of extra parts, many NOS. Woodgraining done; Needs new interior. Everything done right--no time to finish.

BRAD RICHTER (#421)
5616 E.Bobolink
Fresno, CA 93727
209/255-0121

"LEAD" FROM E.A.DePOULI (#310) Demarest, New Jersey - 1937 Century model 61 with sidemounts. Car was re-done for use as a wedding car. Owner is asking \$5500. Call owner at 201/288-2947. Members are also advised to call Ed DePouli at 201/767-3168 for useful information.



PARTS WANTED



WANTED: For 1937 coupe,
license plate bracket that
mounts on tail lamp.

FRANK CALIENDO (#601)
110 S.Clifton
Wichita, KS 67218
316/686-4111

WANTED: For 1938 model 61-
Stromberg AAV-2 carb
Steering wheel horn ring

GEORGE PESKA (#068)
2010 Prairie
Downers Grove, IL 60515
312/964-1613

WANTED: For 1938 model 47-
1 headlight bezel (ring)
Left side grille
Spare tire retainer bracket
1 hubcap
Pass, side sunvisor bracket
All interior door & window
handles (10)

O.J.MISJUNS (#473)
1023 Highland Rd.
Newtown, PA 18940
215/860-8799 (call collect)

WANTED: For 1938 model 40C-
(convertible sedan)
L & R sunvisors with any or all
hardware
Left solid straight welled fender
Right complete sidemount cover &
lockplate
Dual Centerline Radio speaker
Buick jack, base, handle
NOS windshield wiper trans-
right link assy. (Group
10.195, part 4082364)
Bumper badge-good or better.

ABE GOLDBLATT (#535)
111 Colony Dr.
Hampden, MA 01036
413/566-5558 after 7 PM, EST

WANTED: For 1937 80 series-
Body panel that goes under trunk
Rear deck lid
Must be solid & rust-free

DAVE LEWIS (#237)
3825 South Second St.
Springfield, IL 62703
217/529-5290

WANTED: For 1937 model 46C-
Conv.top rear window frame
Stainless molding-both doors
Rumble seat handle & step plates

JEFF WILLEY (#604)
1301 Eshom Rd.
Centralia, WA 98531
206/736-5936

WANTED: For 1938 Special-
Need original upholstery fabric
panel from front or back seat of
4-door. Tan Bedford Cord (not
mohair)-has fine corduroy
appearance. Used is OK.

FRANK WRENICK (#025)
2540 Overlook #8
Cleveland Hts. OH 44106
216/932-4620

WANTED. For 1937 Roadmaster--
2 rebuildable front shocks
Fuel tank sending unit
Rear fender braces, L & R
Flywheel ring gear
'49 Roadmaster timing cover

ROBERT CARSON (#571)
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Sheridan, WY 82801
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37 hubcaps- 1 with new chrome \$42.00: 2 need chrome each
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37 license plate holder and light for trunk back \$15.00

I have other parts including a rebuildable starter, generator, shocks, etc.

Please send S.A.S.E for reply or call between 6:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m. CENTRAL TIME or anytime on weekends. Shipping Extra on all parts.

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NORS '37 & '38 SIDEMOUNT EMBLEMS. Solid bronze, chrome plated. The original run of these has been sold. If enough interest is shown, I will make another run. Please write.

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JIM WALLACE (#283). 16438 Gilmore St. Van Nuys, CA 91405

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We are making a weak and disgraceful showing on parts ads !
Lots of wants, which is fine, but very little for sale. I know there's stuff out there. Are you hoarding it all ?
Going to take it with you? That will not work, and you know it. Where did YOU get stuff when you needed it? Let's go !

One Last Page!

YOU DIDN'T THINK I'D DO IT, DID YOU?

Two plus years ago, I first threatened to print meat loaf recipes if you guys didn't cooperate. Early in my career, I learned this: don't make threats that you are not prepared to carry out. Somehow, I again managed, with the help of a few dedicated members, to scrape together 31 pages of -- I hope -- presentable matter. However, there remained this One Last Page -- Blank. Not to mention all the future pages. So, now you are going to Get What You Deserve.

OLSON'S DATELESS DATE BARS

2 T. butter	1 c. brown sugar
2 eggs	$\frac{1}{4}$ t. baking soda
6 T. flour	1 c. chopped fine nuts
$\frac{1}{2}$ t. salt	Powdered sugar
1 t. vanilla	

Preheat oven to 350. Melt butter in 9x9 baking pan. Beat eggs slightly. Add other ingredients and mix well. Pour over butter in pan. Do not stir. Bake 20 minutes. Dust with powdered sugar.

These are better than meat loaf (albeit perhaps less nutritious), and so easy even an Old Car Freak can succeed. They taste great. Get Fat!

MY FINAL MESSAGE OF 1986

Friends, there is an Unsung Heroine who has benefitted us all: my secretary, Karen Franklin, who types almost all of the words you read in these pages. Skillfully and cheerfully. I have thanked her many times, but this Christmas, why don't you send Karen a card expressing your thanks. You owe her a lot.

Karen Franklin
American Electric Power
P.O.Box 700
Lancaster, Ohio 43130

I typed this. Thanks! Bill

TOO LATE TO CLASSIFY

CAR FOR SALE: 1938 Special Convertible Coupe. Dual sidemounts; radio; DeLuxe heater; Guide fog lamps. Very dependable mechanical condition. Excellent interior & top. Paint is good and most chrome replated. Light gray with red wheels. \$20500 US. Would consider open car trades.

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